

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-09 NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 EUR-10 NEA-06 PRS-01

SAJ-01 RSR-01 CCO-00 /057 W
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O 201533 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6438

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO USNATO IMMEDIATE 963

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMSIXTHFLT

USCINCEUR

USDOCOSTOUTH

USLOSACLANT

USNMR SHAPE

S E C R E T OSLO 1087

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, PFOR, MOPS, SP, NO

SUBJECT: NAVOCFORMED PORT CALL TO BARCELONA

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REFS: (A) USNATO 1373 (B) OSLO 806

BEGIN SUMMARY. THE NORWEGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER TOLD ME THIS MORNING THAT NORWAY HOPES THE US AND THE OTHER NATO ALLIES " WILL RECONSIDER THE QUESTION OF WHETHER AN OFFICIAL VISIT BY A NATO NAVAL FORCE TO A SPANISH PORT WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE ALLIANCE." I TOLD HIM THAT, WHILE I WOULD REPORT HIS POSITION, I FELT CERTAIN THAT CONTINUED NORWEGIAN OPPOSITION WOULD RESULT NOT IN A CANCELLATION OF THE PLAN BUT RATHER IN A CONFRONTATION IN THE DEFENSE PLANNING COMMITTEE. THE MINISTER STUCK WITH HIS REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION AND REFUSED TO GIVE ANY INDICATION OF WHAT THE NORWEGIAN POSITION WILL BE IF WE PERSEVERE. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR MY RESPONSE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION. END SUMMARY.

1. I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER VAARVIK THIS MORNING (MARCH 20), HAVING SENT WORD WHEN I ARRANGED THE CALL LAST WEEK THAT I WOULD WANT TO PURSUE THE DISCUSSION OF THE BARCELONA PORT VISIT WHICH WE HAD BEGUN AT LUNCH ON FEBRUARY 28 (REF B).

2. I BEGAN BY NOTING THAT THE DANES HAVE NOW AGREED TO GIVE SILENT CONSENT TO THE PROPOSAL AND SAID I HOPED NORWAY WOULD JOIN THE REST OF NATO IN ACCEPTING THIS PROCEDURE. VAARVIK HANDED ME A SET OF TALKING POINTS (TEXT CABLED SEPTEL), THEN TURNED TO HSI DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS (VIBE), WHO EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT A BARCELONA VISIT WOULD GIVE RISE TO SPECULATION ABOUT POSSIBLE SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO. NORWAY WOULD THEREFORE LIKE THE US AND THE OTHER NATO ALLIES TO RECONSIDER THE PROPOSED VISIT.

3. I TOLD THE MINISTER THAT SPAIN HAS A VITAL ROLE TO PLAY IN THE DEFENSE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THAT THE DECISION TO IMPROVE NATO COOPERATION WITH SPAIN WAS THE RESULT OF CAREFUL DELIBERATIONS ALREADY TAKEN. ALL THE OTHER ALLIANCE MEMBERS HAD AGREED TO THE VISIT, AND IT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE IF NORWEGIAN OPPOSITION WERE TO LEAD TO A CONFRONTATION IN THE DEFENSE PLANNING COMMITTEE.

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4. WE DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH THE LIKELIHOOD OF PRESS ATTENTION TO AND SPECULATION OVER THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPOSED PORT CALL, VAARVIK AND VIBE ARGUING THAT THEY WERE QUITE SURE THERE WOULD BE EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE AND NOTING INCIDENTALLY THAT THERE WILL BE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN NORWAY THIS FALL. I SAID IT WAS NOT AT ALL CERTAIN THERE WOULD BE MUCH PRESS ATTENTION, IF ANY AT ALL, SINCE SHIPS OF ALL COUNTRIES CALL REGULARLY AT BARCELONA. EVEN IF THERE IS SOME PRESS SPECULATION IN NORWAY, RECENT OPINION POLLS SHOW PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR NATO MEMBERSHIP IS VERY HIGH, AND ONE NEED NOT TAKE TOO SERIOUSLY POSSIBLE ATTACKS FROM THE SMALL ANTI- NATO FORCES ON THE LEFT.

5. I ASKED THE MINISTER WHAT I COULD REPORT TO MY GOVERNMENT; HE REPLIED THAT NORWAY WOULD LIKE THE MATTER TO BE RECONSIDERED. WE DISCUSSED THE ISSUE FURTHER, AND I ASKED HIM AGAIN WHAT I COULD REPORT CONCERNING NORWAY' S STAND IN BRUSSELS. VAARVIK DID NOT ANSWER THIS QUESTION DIRECTLY, REPEATING ONLY THAT THE PORT VISIT SHOULD BE RECONSIDERED. I SAID I WOULD REPORT NORWAY' S VIEWS IMMEDIATELY BUT WOULD BE VERY SURPRISED TO SEE ANY CHANGE IN OUR ATTITUDE. I REPEATED THAT NORWAY' S OPPOSITION WILL RESULT IN AN UNPLEASANT CONFRONTATION IN THE DPC, NOT IN THE PROPOSAL FOR THE BARCELONA VISIT BEING DROPPED.

6. COMMENT. NEITHER IN HIS REMARKS NOR IN THE TALKING POINTS DID VAARVIK HINT AT WHAT NORWAY' S STAND WILL BE IF, AFTER RENEWED DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION, THE OTHER NATO ALLIES REMAIN FIRM IN THEIR AGREEMENT TO LET THE PORT VISIT TAKE PLACE. HE HAS NOT YET FINALLY AND FLATLY RULED OUT NORWEGIAN CONSENT; NEVERTHELESS, THERE WAS THE IMPLICATION FROM HIS AND VIBE' S REMARKS THAT THE NORWEGIANS EXPECT THAT-- IF THE MATTER IS DECIDED NOT BY SILENT CONSENT BUT BY ACTIVE CONSIDERATION IN THE DPC-- THE NORWEGIANS WILL NOT REPEAT NOT BE STANDING ALONE. THEY MAY BE COUNTING ON THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THERE ARE OTHERS WHO WOULD NOT BE WILLING TO ASSENT IF A POSITIVE VOTE WERE REQUIRED.

7. ACTION REQUEST: ASSUMING THAT OUR DECISION TO MOVE AHEAD WITH PLANNING FOR THE VISIT IS FIRM DESPITE NORWEGIAN OBJECTIONS, I BELIEVE I SHOULD TELL VAARVIK (A) THAT THE
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US HAS CAREFULLY WEIGHED HIS REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION BUT CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT THE VISIT IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE ALLIANCE, AND (B) THAT THE US HOPES NORWAY WILL WITHDRAW ITS OBJECTIONS SO THAT IT WILL NOT BE NECESSARY TO CARRY OVER THE ISSUE FOR WHAT COULD BE

ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE IN THE DPC. I WOULD APPRECIATE
GUIDANCE ON THIS AND ANY OTHER CONSIDERATIONS THAT SHOULD
BE INCLUDED IN MY REPLY TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER.
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To: DOD
PM
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